

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 /070 W

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R 291400Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3014

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MO SS AG

SUBJECT: LIBYAN MOVES RE THE SAHARA

REF: ALGIER 0522

1. IN MOVES APPARENTLY TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH THE PROCLAMATION OF A SHARAN REPUBLIC BY THE POLISARIO FRONT, QADHAFI HAS MADE PUBLIC A MESSAGE HE SENT TO KING HASSAN ON FEBRUARY 26, AND THE LIBYAN PRESS ALSO PRINTS A PHOTO-COPY OF A MANUSCRIPT LETTER FROM THE POLISARIO FRONT TO PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH OF MAURITANIA DATED THE SAME DAY.

2. QADHAFI'S LETTER TO "REVEREND BROTHER KING" HASSAN COVERS MOSTLY OLD GROUND, AND IS NOTABLE MOSTLY FOR ITS HIGH MORAL TINE. QADHAFI RECALLS, AS HE HAS PUBLICLY BEFORE, THAT HE WAS THE FIRST ARAB LEADER TO CALL FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE SAHARA, AND THAT UNTIL 1975 HE WAS ALONE IN THIS. UNTIL THEN NONE OF THE OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT (ALGERIA AS WELL

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AS MOROCCO, THAT IS) WOULD LET ARMS TO THE POLISARIO CROSS THEIR TERRITORY. QADHAFI REPEATS THAT ACCOUNT

HE GAVE TO THE NATIONAL CONGRESS IN JANUARY ABOUT HIS ATTEMPTS TO CONVINCE THE POLISARIO LEADERS TO JOIN KING HASSAN, AND THE GUARANTEES HE SOUGHT AND RECEIVED FROM THE KING CONCERNING THEIR TREATMENT. "GOD KNOWS HOW HARD I TRIED TO CONVINCE THEM", QADHAFI SAYS.

3. QADHAFI SAYS HE IS NOT AGAINST MOROCCO, OR THE MOROCCAN ARMY "WHOSE BLOOD IS STILL FRESH ON THE GOLAN", AND HE IS NOT A PARTY TO ANY TERRITORIAL DISPUTE. HE SIMPLY WANTS TO SEE THE SAHARAN PEOPLE EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION. HE IS IN FAVOR OF ARAB UNITY, BUT NOT ARAB UNITY IMPOSED BY FORCE AGAINST PEOPLES; THIS, HE REMINDS THE KING SLYLY, WOULD "CHANGE THE MAP OF BOTH MY COUNTRY AND YOURS". QADHAFI'S MESSAGE CONCLUDES WITH A LEARNED QUOTE FROM AN ARAB CLASSICAL POET TO THE EFFECT THAT MY PEOPLE FAILED TO FOLLOW MY ADVICE, AND LIVED TO REGRET IT.

4. THE POLISARIO LETTER TO MUKHTAR OULD DADDAH WARNS HIM OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF A PROLONGED WAR FOR THE MAURITANIAN PEOPLE. ETHNIC TIES MAKE IT "LOGICAL, NORMAL, AND RIGHT" THAT THE MAURITANIAN PEOPLE SUPPORT THE SAHARAN PEOPLE, SINCE THE TWO PEOPLE HAVE COMMON INTERESTS AND FACE A COMMON DANGER (I.E. MOROCCAN EXPANSIONISM). "FEAR GOD, O MUKHTAR, FROM THE POOR ON WHOM YOU ARE IMPOSING TAXES, SO THAT THEY MAY LOSE THEIR HOMELAND ONE DAY OR THE NEXT".

5. COMMENT: QADHAFI MAY NOT BE A PARTY TO THE SAHARA CONFLICT, BUT HE IS PLAYING A PART IN THE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ON THE ALGIERIAN SIDE. AT THE SAME TIME HIS OBLIQUE REMINDER TO THE ALGIERIAN IN HIS MESSAGE TO HASSAN THAT HE WAS A SUPPORTER OF THE POLISARIO LONG BEFORE THEY WERE WORTH NOTING, AS IS HIS FLATTERING REFERENCE TO THE BRAVERY OF THE MOROCCAN ARMY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE, SELFDETERMINATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TRIPOL00271
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760077-0037
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976021/aaaaaaaaaf.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JUN 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <07 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIBYAN MOVES RE THE SAHARA
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, SS, AG, MO, LY, F POLISARIO, (HASSAN II), (QADHAFI, MU'AMMAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006